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**ENG 1302: Written Argument and Research**

**COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2011**

**Instructor:** Brandon Barnes

**Office Location:** HL 233

**Office Hours:** 10:00am-12:00pm, 3:30-4:30pm TR

**Office Phone:** 903.886.5262

**Office Fax:** (903) 886.5980

**University Email Address:** bbarnes2@leo.tamu-commerce.edu

The best way to reach me is by email.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This is a common syllabus used by all graduate students teaching sections of this course.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:**

*Textbooks and Materials Required*:

Adkins, Tabetha. *Ethnographic Inquires in Writing*. Southlake, Texas: Fountainhead

Press, 2010.

Sunstein, Bonnie Stone and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. *FieldWorking: Reading and Writing*

*Research*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006.

Three-ring binder to serve as your Research Portfolio (see below)

*Optional Texts:*

Resources for Ethnographic Research (asking good interview questions, professional

associations’ codes of ethics, etc.)

<http://tabethaadkins.com/ethnography_resources.html>

The Celebration of Student Writing at Eastern Michigan University <http://www.emich.edu/english/fycomp/celebration/index.htm>

Some of our past Celebrations:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMWkdAzGYvw

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3r0PGbfhHIo

**Course Description:**

This course is about conducting research. In the writing program at Texas A&M University-Commerce, we believe students learn to do research best by conducting research products of their own design—with some focus and help from instructors. In this class you will conduct ethnographic research projects in which you’ll “go out into the field” to learn something about reading and writing in contexts or in its “natural habitat.” You’ll then become more informed about these findings by comparing what you’ve learned with scholarship conducted by professional researchers and conducting further “library research” to help you create a more informative research report. You’ll finish the semester by presenting your findings in a public forum called The Celebration of Student Writing.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students who successfully complete ENG 1302 will have:

1. an understanding and ability to make use of primary and secondary sources within a focused, academic argument

2. an awareness of context and how audience and context affect a writer’s rhetorical choices

3. the rhetorical flexibility necessary to negotiate a variety of academic tasks (research, interviews, close reading) leading to a sustained argument that is convincing, informative, and well-researched

4. an awareness of context and how our own subject positions as writers might affect our findings—and how to work through potential biases toward more effective arguments

5. an ability to effectively report research findings in writing (via a well-researched and articulated essay) and in person (via a poster presentation at the end of the semester—Celebration of Student Writing)

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments**

**Grading:** All major written assignments will be submitted to me as a Microsoft Word document via email at [barnes.english@gmail.com](mailto:barnes.english@gmail.com) (NB: this is not my regular contact email listed above). Electronic submission allows me to use the MS Word Comment function, resulting in thorough comments. This also means that, on days when major written assignments are due, students need not be physically present to submit their work. As a general rule, *late work will not be accepted*. It is your responsibility to turn all assignments to me on time. Should you anticipate any difficulties getting your assignments to me, you must first make contact with me either in class or through email to request an extension, explaining in detail the reasons your assignment cannot be submitted on time. I reserve the right to refuse any requests for an extension, which is not to exceed twenty-four hours.  
  
A note about page length. Below, you will see required page lengths. A page means a *full*, not a partial, page. So, for example, if an assignment requires a minimum of two pages and a maximum of three, that means the paper should include *no less than* two full pages of text—text going all the way down to the bottom of the page—and *no more than* three full pages of text. You must learn to develop thorough arguments while at the same time learning to write concisely, and page-length constraints are designed to help you do that.

**How Course Grade is Determined:**

*Writing Assignment 1- Research Framework and Methodology (10%)*:Using Chapter One from *EIIW,* explain your theory of the concept of “literacy.” What is literacy? How do you know a “literacy event” when you see it? How will you go about looking for literacy in its “natural habitat” or in context? Think of this essay as the framework you are creating for your study. (3-5 pages.)

*Writing Assignment 2- Research Proposal (5%)*:In this short essay, explain to your instructor where you’re going to do your research, what you’ll be looking for and at in that research site, and why this site is appropriate for your research. In interest of conducting ethical research, explain your connection to this site (e.g., you eat lunch there often, you know someone who works there, etc.). Explain what you anticipate you will learn about literacy in this site. (2-3 pages.)

*Writing Assignment 3- Informed Consent and Code of Ethics (10%)*: Using The Belmont Report as a framework and the Codes of Ethics developed by professional organizations like [The Modern Language Association](http://www.mla.org/repview_profethics), [The American Anthropological Association](file:///C:\Users\Brandon\AppData\Local\Temp\American%20Anthropological%20Assocation), [The Association of Internet Researchers](http://aoir.org/documents/ethics-guide/), or [The American Folklore Society](http://www.afsnet.org/?page=Ethics), create a Code of Ethics you will follow in your own research. You may also find information in *EIIW* and *FW* to assist you with this project. Once you have created your Code of Ethics, you will also need to create an Informed Consent form that your research participants will read and sign. Remember that your research participants are the audience for this text, so you’ll want to create an informed consent sheet that makes sense to them but also follows the guidelines and expectations of your instructor. (5-7 pages, including informed-consent form.)

*Writing Assignment 4- Ethnographic Setting Essay (10%)*:In this essay, you will demonstrate an ability to use descriptive language to “paint a picture with words.” Your goal is to describe your research site so thoroughly and completely that readers can imagine themselves there. This essay will eventually become part of your final ethnographic essay. (4-6 pages.)

*Annotated Bibliography (10%)*: Since good ethnographic research involves both fieldwork and traditional library research, you will need to gather sources that inform what you learn in your fieldwork. These sources should be books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and other relevant sources approved by your instructor. Since the research you’re doing is scholarly, you will only use scholarly sources to support your claims. (That means no *Wikipedia* or Dictionary entries, for example.) You must annotate **ten items**. See more information on annotating, see [this site](http://www.tabethaadkins.com/annotated_bibs.html).

*Informal Writing Assignments and Participation (10%)*:This category includes any in-class writing assignments, informal writing assignments, homework writing assignments, etc.

*Celebration of Student Writing (10%):* May 13 from 2:00-4:00pm in the SRSC.

The Celebration of Student Writing is an event held every semester where students enrolled in

ENG 1302 demonstrate what they learned in their research projects. You should

create some kind of display with artifacts, visual elements, and information about what you

learned in your research. The “celebration” will look like a science fair with rows of tables and

projects displayed. Your participation in this event is mandatory.

*Final Ethnographic Essay (20%)*:A final essay detailing the results of your study, what your findings mean in relation to the field of literacy studies, etc. Look to chapters four and five in *EIIW* for what this project should *look like*. Keep in mind that other essays you’ve composed this semester including WA1, WA3, WA4, and the annotated bibliography will all be part of this essay. (15-18 pages.)

*Research Portfolio (15%)*:In your research portfolio you’ll include your drafts from the semester, informed consent forms, informal writing assignments, double sided observation notes, reflexive writing, research artifacts, and anything else that help create an accurate portrayal of the research you conducted this semester.

Please note that these assignments are subject to modification as I see fit.

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

* + Flash drive or other means of storing digital versions of the essays and other written material you generate
  + A valid, working email address you check often (everyday)
  + Regular internet access (additional readings available online)
  + Access to a computer with a word processing program and a printer (some assignments must be typed and printed)

**ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

Some supplementary texts for this course exist exclusively online, so you must have Internet access to read and/or view these texts.

**COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

**Interaction with Instructor Statement:**

Please contact you instructor with any questions you may have. Each instructor in the department of literature and languages is required to keep at least three office hours per course per week.

**Grievance Procedure:**

If you have concerns about the class or about me as an instructor, please speak to me about those concerns first.  If you are not satisfied with the outcome of our conversation, the next person in the chain of command is the Director of the Writing Program, Dr. Tabetha Adkins. Her email address is [Tabetha\_Adkins@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:Tabetha_Adkins@tamu-commerce.edu).

**COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

**Course Specific Procedures:**

*Writing Center*

The Writing Center offers writers free, one-on-one assistance. We welcome all writers, majors, and disciplines—undergraduate and graduate students alike. In fact, we work from the premise that all writers, no matter their ability level, benefit from the feedback of knowledgeable readers. The Writing Center staff is trained to provide writers with just this service. In short, we are here to help you help yourself. In order to ensure the most effective session possible, we offer visitors the following suggestions: (1) Get started on your writing project early, and visit the Writing Center at least one day before your final draft is due. You will need time to work with the ideas and suggestions generated in your tutorial sessions. (2) Bring a written copy of your assignment, any relevant readings, and one or two specific questions or concerns you would like to discuss with us.

We are located in the Hall of Languages, Room 103 (903-886-5280) and online at <http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/academics/colleges/artsSciences/departments/literatureLanguages/writingCenter/>

*Attendance Policy*

Attendance is **required** for this course. You cannot possibly get all you can out of this course without attending and participating. They will entail the following:

* Showing up to class
* Showing up to class on time
* Turning off all cell phones and iPods
* Having read and/or completed the assigned material by class time
* Engaging in civil classroom discussion, well informed by the reading and lectures

My policy on tardies is as follows. This class begins at the start of the hour. A student is tardy when s/he arrives after that time. I will allow students to continue to file in to the room until ten after the hour, at which time I will close the door, admitting no more students into the classroom for that day. Simply put, if you are more than ten minutes late for class, you will receive an absence. I do not tolerate disruptions to the class proceedings, and walking in to class that late I consider a disruption. (No patently fallacious arguments, please, that the student is paying for the course and so should be allowed to come whenever s/he feels like it and receive credit for being there. The price of tuition allows merely for the opportunity to take the course—with all its stipulations and provisos. Tuition is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for receiving course credit.)

Three tardies is the equivalent of one absence.

Penalties will be exacted for excessive absences. Students are allowed up to five absences. At six absences, the student’s grade will be dropped automatically one letter. After seven absences, the student cannot pass the course.

NB: The university has no policy for “excused absences” except for university-sanctioned events, so save your absences for illness, court appearances, child-care arrangements, and other situations when absence becomes absolutely necessary.

*Academic Honesty*

The official departmental policy: “Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonestly. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b [1,2,3])If you ever have any questions about a particular use of a source, always ask your instructor. They want you to avoid plagiarism, too, so they will help you do so whenever and wherever they can. Do what you can to take advantage of this support—to look innocent in addition to being innocent when it comes to charges of plagiarism.

Students guilty of academic dishonesty of plagiarism can expect to fail the assignment in question or the entire course depending on the nature of the incident.

*On University-Sanctioned Activities*

To accommodate students who participate in university-sanctioned activities, the First-Year Composition Program offers sections of this course at various times of the day and week. If you think this course may conflict with a university-sanctioned activity in which you are involved—athletics, etc.—please see your instructor after class on the first day*.*

**University Specific Procedures:**

***ADA Statement***

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

**Texas A&M University-Commerce**

**Gee Library 132**

**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**

**Fax (903) 468-8148**

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu)

[Student Disability Resources & Services](http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/studentLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

*Student Conduct*

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and

acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.  (See *Code of Student*

*Conduct from Student Guide Handbook).*

I expect my students to comport themselves in a professional manner at all times. Students not adhering to the conventions of civil discourse may be dismissed from class meetings at my discretion. Should unwarranted behavior persist, I reserve the right to drop a student from the course. Other grounds for student dismissal from the class meeting include a student’s not coming prepared to discuss the material or to participate in activities scheduled for that day (including, but not limited to, peer-review exercises). This holds regardless of the length of the student’s commute.

**COURSE OUTLINE / TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

*Ethnographic Inquires in Writing* = EIIW

*FieldWorking* = FW

**Week 1**: *EIIW* chapter one

**Week 2**: “Literacy Practices” by Barton & Hamilton

*FW* 1-24

**Week 3:** “Literacy in Three Metaphors” by Sylvia Scribner in *EIIW*

“Literacy, Opportunity, and Economic Change” by Deborah Brandt in *EIIW*

**Week 4:** *FW 25-64*

Introduction to Chapter three in *EIIW*

**WA1 due**

**Week 5:** *FW* Chapter 68-109

“The Belmont Report” in *EIIW*

**WA 2 due**

**Week 6:** “Seduction and Betrayal” by Thomas Newkirk in *EIIW*

“Ethnographic Research Ethics and Amish Values” by Tabetha Adkins in *EIIW*

**Week 7: WA 3 due**

Introduction to Chapter four of *EIIW*

“Reading Rites and Sports” by Jabari Mahiri in *EIIW*

*FW* 176-217

**Week 8: Midterm Conferences**

**Spring Break**

**Week 9**: “Blinded By the Letter” by Wysocki & Johnson-Eiola in *EIIW*

**WA4 due**

**Week 10:** “Introduction” by Bronwyn T. Williams

*FW* 127-154

3 annotations for bibliography due

**Week 11**: *FW*  Chapter 8

**Annotated Bibliography due**

**Week 12:** “Becoming Literate” by Andrea R. Fishman in *EIIW*

**Week 13: draft of final Ethnographic Essay due**

Read over students examples, Chapter 5 in *EIIW*

**Week 14: One-on-one conferences**

**Week 15:** Prepare Research Portfolio for Presentation (Celebration of Student Writing); Peer review final papers

**Celebration of Student Writing: Friday, May 6 2:00-4:00 in The Club, SRSC**

**Final copy of Ethnographic Essay Due – May 4**

**Research Portfolio due – May 6**